(i) Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has been providing indigenously developed SWATI aircraft to flying clubs/institutes.

(ii) Aero Club of India has provided 28 Cessna trainer aircraft to flying clubs/institutes.

(iii) 8 simultors have been purchased and allotted to flying clubs/institutes by DGCA.

(iv) The activities of Flying/Gliding Clubs/Institutes are monitored regularly by the DGCA to attract more trainees.

SWATI aircrafts

6860. SHRI V. RAJESHWAR RAO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) how many SWATI aircrafts were produced by BHEL uptill now;

(b) what is the present cost and selling price of SWATI aircraft;

(c) how does it compare with CESSNA and SILVAIR aircrafts;

(d) who have been the major purchasers of this aircraft;

(e) what is being done to encourage sales of this aircraft; and

(f) the foreign countries to which this aircraft has been exported?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) The Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL), Hardwar has manufactured 4 Swati trainer aircraft so far as per the contract the first 82 aircrafts are to be sold at a price of Rs. 27 lakhs per aircraft to the Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).

(c) Swati aircraft is comparable with Cessna model 152 and is superior to Silvair model 8-F type of aircraft.

(d) to (f) The DGCA has been the only purchaser of Swati aircraft so far. The BHEL is exploring the possibilities of selling Swati aircraft to potential users. No aircraft has been exported so far.

Proposal to private ground handing of aircrafts

6861. SHRI SURINDER KUMAR SINGLA:

SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Airlines propose to privatise ground handling of aircraft and equipment;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any agency has been identified for the task;

(d) whether Government's own machinery has failed to maintain ground work; and

(e) if so, the facts and details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

(d) and (e) The ground-handling of Indian Airlines' aircraft and equipment is adequately served by the Ground Support Department of Indian Airlines.

Upgradation of airports

6862. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to upgrade some airports in order to introduce regular plane services;

(b) whether the airport set up at Silsman near Keonijhergarh is proposed to be upgraded for the purpose; and